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ABSTRACT

Youth in the western United States are increasing in number, but increased numbers will not necessarily translate into increased expenditures for youth programs. In the future, children in the west are more likely to have a nonWhite racial background, especially Hispanic and Asian, and they may be first-generation Americans whose parents' native language is not English. Young people are more likely to live in urban or suburban areas, so programs attractive to urban based youth are essential. Over half of the young people will spend some time in a single-parent family, usually headed by the mother and often under serious financial strain. Programs must be devised to meet the unmet emotional and physical needs of these children, many of whom will be alone a great deal of the time, since the majority of mothers will be in the labor force. Seven tables and seven figures provide information on ethnicity, family structure, poverty, and area of residence for children aged 5 to 14 years in 14 western states (1980-2000). The changes described all point to the heightened need for youth programs, since the proportion of the young who will require additional support systems outside of the home will continue to increase. (SKW)

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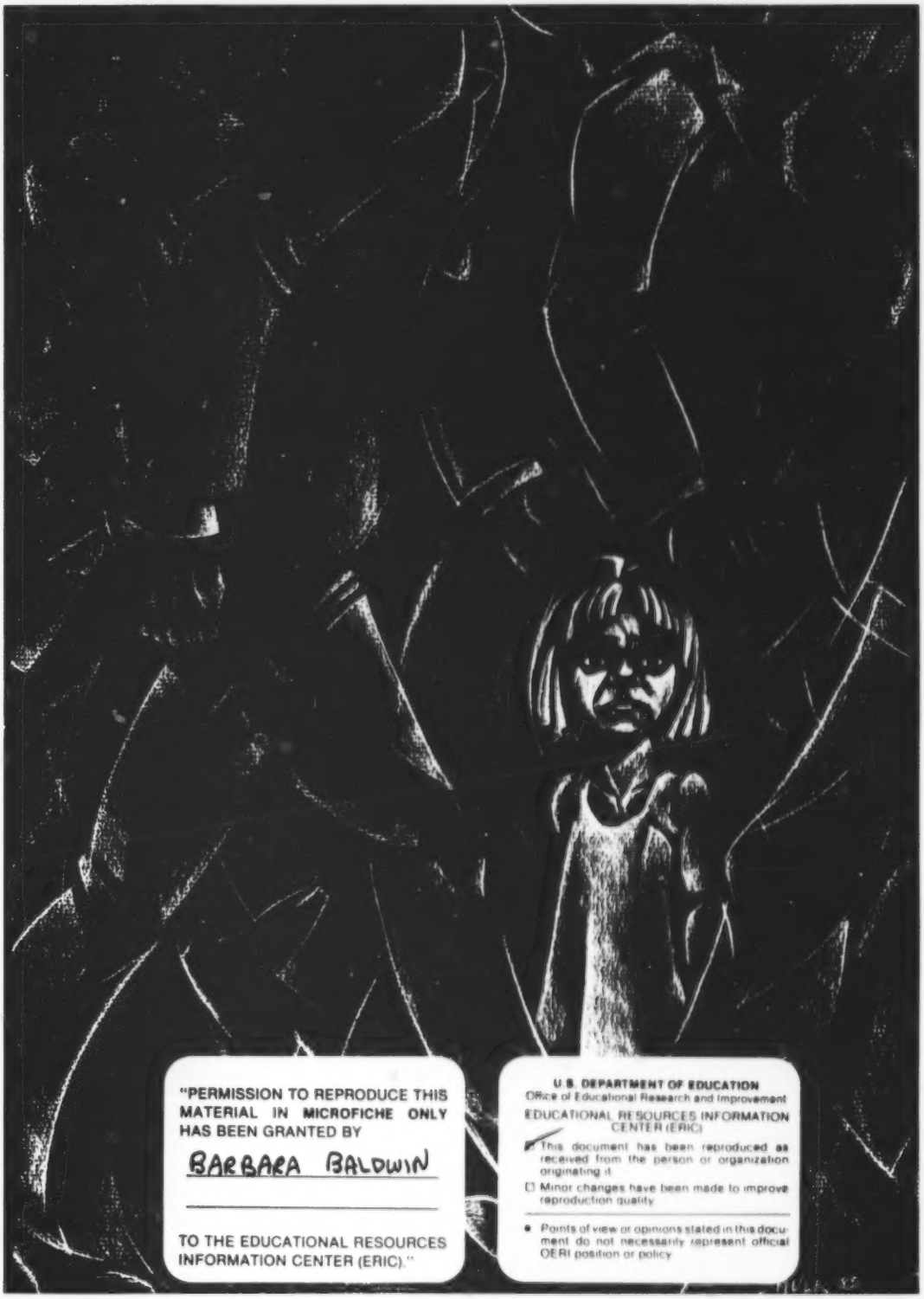

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OUR CHILDREN, OUR FUTURE

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Our Children, Our Future

Changing characteristics of youth: implications for programming

Table of Contents

Page

Increasing population of 5 to 14 year olds 5
Increasing racial diversity 6
Location of youth 8
Living arrangements 9
Working mothers 11
Children living in poverty 13
Conclusion 14
References 15

List of Tables

1. Changing numbers of 5 to 14 year olds in western states: 1980-2000 5
2. Number and percent in primary minority groups: 1980 6
3. Number and percent of population which is White and Nonwhite by state in 1980 6
4. Population in metropolitan and nonmetropolitan areas: 1980-1984 9
5. Changing living arrangements for children under 18 in western states: 1970 and 1980 10
6. Number and percent of women in the labor force in western states with children 6 to 17: 1970 and 1980 11
7. Number and percent of children under 18 below the poverty level in western states: 1970 and 1980 13

List of Figures

1. Projections of the population of the United States by race/ethnicity: 1980-2020 with high and low immigration assumptions 7
2. Percent of the population in metropolitan areas in the west: 1984 8
3. Percent of children under 18 living in the U.S. in single parent and other families by race/ethnicity: 1970, 1980, 1984 10
4. Percent of married women in labor force by age of youngest child: 1970-1985 11
5. U.S. labor force participation rates for women: 1970 to 1995 12
6. Average number of births per woman for Whites and Nonwhites: United States, 1960-1984 12
7. Persons below the poverty level: 1969-1984 13

A child is a person who is going to carry on what you have started. He is going to sit where you are sitting, and when you are gone, attend to those things which you think are important. You may adopt all the policies you please, but how they are carried out depends on him. He will assume control of your cities, your states and your nation. He is going to move in and take over your churches, your schools, your universities and your corporations. All your books are going to be judged, praised or condemned by him. The fate of humanity is in his hands.

. . . Abraham Lincoln

WRDC

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, Alaska, Arizona, California, Colorado, Guam, Hawaii, Idaho, Montana,
Nevada, New Mexico, Oregon, Utah, Washington, Wyoming

Our Children, Our Future

Changing characteristics of youth: implications for programming

The west is an area of great diversity. Some states have large populations concentrated in densely settled areas; others are small and sparsely settled. Some states have a great deal of racial and ethnic diversity; others have little. In spite of this diversity, the west like the rest of the United States is undergoing a number of social changes that have implications for youth programs. To be successful, organizations must understand these changes and incorporate them into future programs.

This report discusses growth in the youth population, changes in racial diversity, urbanization, family structure and living arrangements, the increasing number of working mothers, and children in poverty. In each case, implications for youth programs are discussed. The thirteen states of the western region[1] and the 4-H program of the Cooperative Extension System, and thus school-age children, are the specific focus of this report. The trends discussed, however, are occurring throughout the U.S., and have implications for a broad spectrum of youth programs across the country.

[1] These western states are Alaska, Arizona, California, Colorado, Hawaii, Idaho, Montana, Nevada, New Mexico, Oregon, Utah, Washington, and Wyoming.

Increasing Population of 5 to 14 Year Olds

Throughout the west, an increasing number of young people will be available for programs. Increases in this age group will range from 37,000 in Alaska to just short of a million in California. A complete alphabetical listing shows the following additions to the number of 5 to 14 year olds by the year 2000:

Alaska	37,000
Arizona	350,000
California	1,000,000
Colorado	200,000
Hawaii	27,000
Idaho	115,000
Montana	22,500
Nevada	145,000
New Mexico	71,000
Oregon	220,000
Utah	335,500
Washington	260,000
Wyoming	112,000

Table 1 shows these projected numbers as well as the percent of the total population which will be 5 to 14 years of age in 1980, 1990, and 2000.

Although all states can expect to see increasing numbers of youth, the percent of the population 5 to 14 years of age will not increase, and in some states may decline slightly, because other segments of the population, particularly those 65 and older, will be growing more rapidly. This may seem like just an interesting statistical sidelight, but it is more than that.

It means that increasing numbers of children will not translate easily into increasing expenditures on youth.

. . . increasing numbers of children will not translate easily into increasing expenditures on youth.

Instead, other groups which often have more political clout, will be vying for scarce local, state, and federal dollars. Groups committed to providing successful youth-oriented programs will have to do more than just plan those programs. They will have to be in continual contact with political decision-makers at all levels to secure the necessary support and funds for such programs.

Table 1. Changing Numbers of 5 to 14 Year-Olds in Western States: 1980-2000

State	% OF POPULATION 5-14			NUMBER 5 TO 14			CHANGE PERCENT		CHANGE ABSOLUTE	
	1980	1990	2000	1980	1990	2000	1980-1990	1990-2000	1980-1990	1990-2000
Alaska	17.3	16.5	16.9	69,100	85,900	106,800	24.3	24.3	16,800	20,900
Arizona	15.9	14.3	14.3	430,800	571,600	798,500	32.7	39.7	140,800	226,900
California	14.6	14.2	14.5	3,446,200	3,919,900	4,444,800	13.7	13.4	473,700	524,900
Colorado	15.2	14.3	14.1	439,000	535,900	658,300	22.1	22.8	96,900	122,400
Hawaii	15.3	13.8	13.8	148,100	157,500	176,500	6.3	12.1	9,400	19,000
Idaho	17.2	18.8	18.4	161,900	227,800	277,500	40.7	21.8	65,900	49,700
Montana	15.6	15.7	15.2	122,700	139,300	145,900	13.5	4.7	16,600	6,600
Nevada	14.7	12.9	13.4	117,200	164,900	256,400	40.7	55.5	47,700	91,500
New Mexico	17.2	16.5	16.4	223,000	254,200	283,700	14.0	11.6	31,200	29,500
Oregon	14.9	15.0	14.8	391,800	497,800	595,000	27.1	19.5	106,000	97,200
Utah	18.6	22.0	21.4	271,900	449,100	594,800	65.2	32.4	177,200	145,700
Washington	15.0	14.7	14.8	617,800	735,300	864,400	19.0	17.6	117,500	129,100
Wyoming	16.2	18.3	18.4	76,500	128,500	184,700	68.0	43.7	52,000	56,200

Source: U.S. Bureau of the Census, 1983.

Increasing Racial Diversity

Although there will be more children in the west who might participate in youth programs, they will differ from young people of the past in many ways. One of the most obvious differences will be their racial/ethnic background.

All but one of the well-known minority groups is over-represented in the west. The west contains 19 percent of the U.S. population, but 58 percent of the nation's Asians live there, along with 43 percent of the Hispanics, and 51 percent of the Native Americans. Only the Black population is under-represented in this area, with just 9 percent living there. Although Blacks are the nation's largest minority group, in the west they are outnumbered almost 3 to 1 by people of Spanish origin.

Table 2 shows the number of individuals in each of these minority groups by state, and the percent they represent of each state's population. Western states differ a great deal in terms of the presence of minorities in their populations. For example, Montana has very few Blacks, Asians, or persons of Spanish origin, but it does have a sizeable Native American population. Arizona has relatively few Asians, a somewhat larger number of Blacks, a moderate number of Native Americans, and a large Spanish origin population. Each state is somewhat unique in its mix and representation of minorities. The one generalization that can be made is that California, because of its size, has by far the largest number of all the minorities.

Table 2. Number and Percent in Primary Minority Groups: 1980

State	Blacks		Asian and Pacific Islander		Native American, Eskimo, Aleut		Spanish Origin[1]	
Alaska	13,643	3.4	8,314	2.1	64,103	16.0	9,507	2.3
Arizona	74,977	2.8	24,562	0.9	152,754	5.6	440,701	16.2
California	1,819,281	7.7	1,312,973	5.5	201,489	0.9	4,544,331	19.2
Colorado	101,703	3.5	34,257	1.2	18,068	0.6	339,717	11.7
Hawaii	17,364	1.8	590,659	61.2	2,768	0.2	71,263	7.4
Idaho	2,716	0.3	6,721	0.7	10,521	1.1	36,615	3.8
Montana	1,786	0.2	3,097	0.4	37,715	4.7	9,974	1.3
Nevada	50,999	6.4	15,606	1.9	13,409	1.7	53,879	6.7
New Mexico	24,020	1.8	7,728	0.6	107,481	8.2	477,222	36.6
Oregon	37,060	1.4	40,958	1.6	27,314	1.0	65,847	2.5
Utah	9,225	0.6	20,224	1.4	19,256	1.3	60,302	4.1
Washington	105,574	2.6	111,607	2.7	60,804	1.5	120,016	2.9
Wyoming	3,364	0.7	2,044	0.4	7,094	1.5	24,499	5.2

Source: U.S. Bureau of the Census 1982, 1983a, 1984, 1987.
[1] Persons of Spanish origin may be of any race.

But looking at just the overall number of minorities in a state underestimates their importance in the youth population. Minority populations are substantially younger than the White population. In the case of Blacks and Native Americans, this is due to somewhat higher fertility rates. In the case of Asians and people of Spanish origin, these higher fertility rates are reinforced by past and current immigration trends in which young adults tend to predominate.

Table 3 depicts the effect of these trends on the population under 18 compared to the total population. In all states, nonwhites make up a larger percentage of the population under 18 than they do of the total population. Although only 23 percent of the total population in Alaska is nonwhite, 28 percent of those under 18 are nonwhite. Only in Idaho, Wyoming, and Utah, which have relatively small

. . . nonwhites make up a larger percentage of the population under 18 than they do of the total population.

Table 3. Number and Percent of Population which is White and Nonwhite by State in 1980

State	Percent of: Total Population Which is: White	Nonwhite	Population Under 18 Which is: White	Nonwhite	Number of Persons in: Total Population Who Are: White	Nonwhite	Population Under 18 Who Are: White	Nonwhite
Alaska	77.1	22.9	72.0	28.0	309,728	92,123	94,178	36,567
Arizona	82.4	17.6	74.9	25.1	2,240,761	477,454	592,846	198,641
California	76.2	23.8	69.5	30.5	18,030,893	5,637,009	4,438,228	1,950,730
Colorado	89.0	11.0	85.5	14.5	2,571,498	318,466	691,524	117,289
Hawaii	33.0	67.0	29.6	70.4	318,770	645,921	81,438	194,145
Idaho	95.5	4.5	94.4	5.6	901,641	42,294	289,463	17,202
Montana	94.1	5.9	91.4	8.6	740,148	46,542	211,917	19,978
Nevada	87.5	12.5	83.1	16.9	700,345	100,148	179,395	36,404
New Mexico	75.0	25.0	68.7	31.3	977,586	325,307	287,027	130,880
Oregon	94.6	5.4	92.8	7.2	2,490,610	142,495	670,936	52,121
Utah	94.6	5.4	93.9	6.1	1,382,550	78,487	507,252	32,853
Washington	91.5	8.5	89.0	11.0	3,779,170	352,986	1,014,025	125,335
Wyoming	95.1	4.9	93.8	6.2	446,488	23,069	136,590	8,963

Source: U.S. Bureau of the Census, 1983b: Table 67.

nonwhite populations, is the percent of nonwhites nearly the same in the total population and in those under 18.

It is important to emphasize that these figures are based on 1980 Census data in which persons of Spanish origin may be of any race. In western states, about 50 percent of the Spanish origin population picked the White racial category on the 1980 Census. If they had been included in the nonwhite category, the difference between the total nonwhite population and that under 18 would be even greater in the comparisons above.

Projections show that the nonwhite population will continue to grow faster than the White population. The first part of Figure 1 projects the growth of the White and nonwhite populations to the year 2020 with different assumptions about the amount of annual immigration. (In these projections, Hispanics have been reclassified into the nonwhite category.)

Immigration will make relatively little difference in the growth of the White population. It will make a substantial difference in the growth of the nonwhite population, however. If one assumes an annual immigration of 500,000 persons a year, the nonwhite population will grow from 45.5 million in 1980 to 88.8 million in 2020. In 1980, the nonwhites made up 20 percent of the U.S. population. Under this assumption, they would make up 26 percent of the population in 2000, and 30 percent in 2020. If one assumes a higher level of immigration, 1 million persons per year, the nonwhite population will reach 111.3 million persons in 2020, representing 30 percent of the population in 2000 and 35 percent in 2020.

The second panel of Figure 1 illustrates that since most immigrants now come from Latin America and Asia, the Hispanic and Asian populations will grow most rapidly in the near future. Under the assumption of low immigration, the Black population will grow from 26.5 to 41.7 million persons, or from 12 to 14 percent of the U.S. population. The Hispanic population will increase from 14.6 to 32 million persons, or from 6 to 11 percent of the population, and the Asian and "other" category will grow from 4.4 to 14.7 million persons, or from 2 to 5 percent of the population.

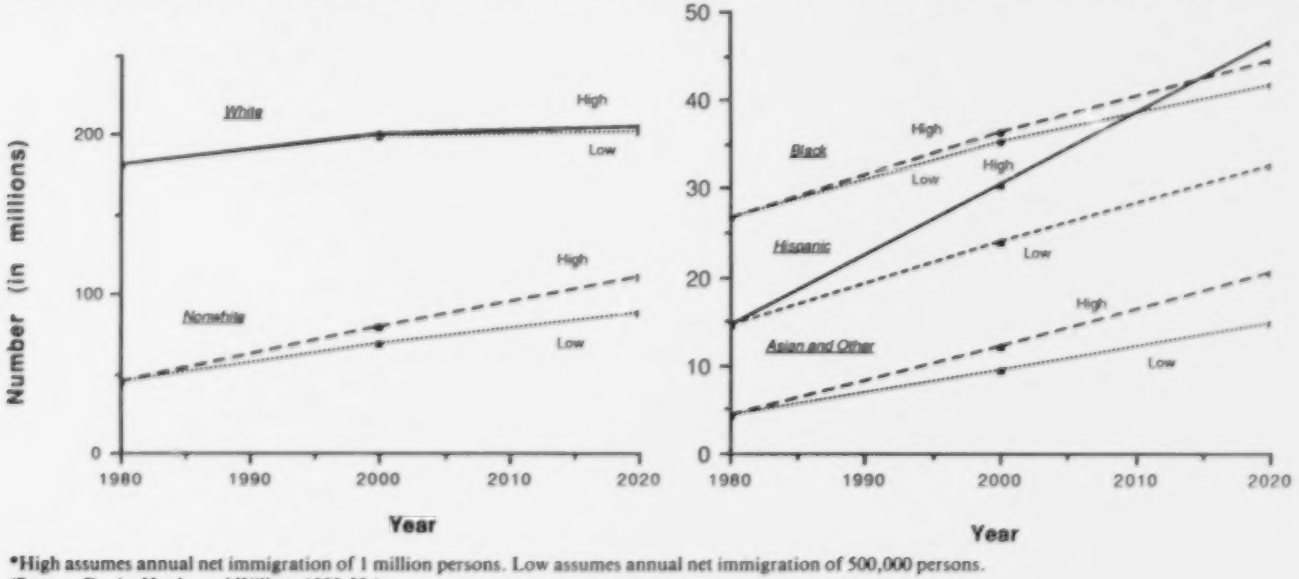
Under the high immigration assumption, by 2020 the most dramatic change would be in the Hispanic population, which could become the nation's largest minority at 46.6 million persons, representing 25 percent of the population. The Black population would increase slightly to 44.4 million, and would still represent 14 percent of the population, and the Asian and "other" groups would grow to 20 million, or 6 percent of the population.

Since 1980, the United States has been receiving between 500,000 and 600,000 legal immigrants each year. Estimates of the number of *illegal* immigrants who enter and settle in the United States range from 100,000 to 500,000 a year in the 1980s (Bouvier and Gardner, 1986:37-38). These projections provide a good indicator of the range within which the nonwhite population of the U.S. will probably fall in the near future, barring any dramatic changes in immigration policies.

. . . efforts must go beyond passive affirmative action goals.

Since the west already has about half of the nation's Asians and Hispanics, these trends will have a much greater impact than in other parts of the United States. If 4-H and other youth programs are to continue to be important to the nation's young people, steps must be taken to include

Figure 1. Projections of the population of the U.S. by race/ethnicity: 1980-2020 with high and low immigration assumptions*



*High assumes annual net immigration of 1 million persons. Low assumes annual net immigration of 500,000 persons. (Source: Davis, Haub, and Willett, 1983:39.)

minority youth. If these programs do not reach large numbers of Asian and Hispanic youth in the west, both local and national political support may erode, as minorities gain more influence and look elsewhere to fill the needs of their youth. Efforts must go beyond passive affirmative action goals. Youth programs must ascertain the specific goals, settings, and formats that are most appropriate for meeting the needs of minorities, then incorporate these and put them into practice.

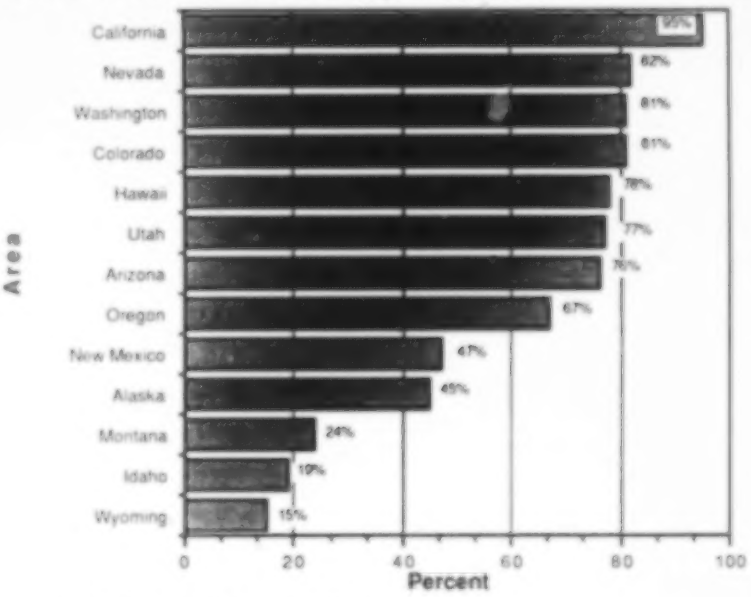
Location of Youth

Although the west is not a uniform entity in terms of urbanization, most of the population lives in metropolitan areas.[2] California is by far the most metropolitan of the western states, with 95 percent of its population living in such areas. At the other end of the continuum, Idaho and Wyoming have the smallest percentages living in metropolitan areas of any state in the U.S. In only three other states (Montana, New Mexico, and Alaska) did more than 50 percent of the people live in nonmetropolitan areas. Figure 2 shows the percent of each state's population that lived in metropolitan areas in 1984.

But what about the future? Will states in the west become increasingly metropolitan? During the 1970s a turnaround occurred in the U.S. For the first time in many decades, the rural, nonmetropolitan counties of the nation grew at a more rapid rate than did the metropolitan counties. At the same time, however, metropolitan areas actually gained numerically more individuals.

Since the beginning of this decade, growth in nonmetropolitan areas has slowed dramatically. Table 4 gives the population in metropolitan and nonmetropolitan areas in western states, as well as the change in population

Figure 2. Percent of the population in metropolitan areas in the west: 1984



(Source: U.S. Bureau of the Census, 1985a.)

between 1980 and 1984, both in terms of percentages and actual numbers. In California, Hawaii, Utah, and Wyoming, on a percentage basis, nonmetropolitan areas continued to grow faster than did metropolitan areas. Numerically, however, most of the growth occurred in metropolitan areas. In only four relatively small states—Montana, Idaho, New Mexico, and Wyoming—nonmetropolitan counties added more people than metropolitan counties did. In all other states, metropolitan areas grew more rapidly, both in terms of the percentage changes and in terms of the total number of persons added.

. . . these young people will need urban-based skills to find jobs and live in a different environment. . .

The turnaround of the 1970s was an unexpected break from past patterns of growth, and it is difficult to predict if or when such a growth pattern might recur. In the west, however, many nonmetropolitan counties are resource-based, deriving most of their economic activity from timber, mining, or agriculture. As long as these sectors of the economy remain depressed, growth will not occur in rural areas of the west. Even an economic revival in these areas is unlikely to be of sufficient scope to change the balance of westerners living in metropolitan areas.

Consequently for most states in the west, it is essential that programs be attractive to and useful for urban/suburban-based youth. Smaller states in the west, which still have large percentages of youth in nonmetropolitan areas, may rely on traditional programs. But these states should recognize that many of their youth may eventually migrate to more urban areas. Rural youth programs which ignore the fact that these young people will need urban-based skills to find jobs and live in a different environment, will be doing a disservice to many of their clients.

[2] A Metropolitan Statistical Area (MSA) is a county with an urbanized area of 50,000 or more and a county population of at least 100,000. Contiguous, "twin cities" may make up this urbanized area, and if these cities are in different counties, both counties will qualify as metropolitan. Counties adjacent to an MSA which do not have an urbanized area of 50,000 or more may be counted as metropolitan if they have strong social and economic ties with the main county.

Table 4. Population in Metropolitan and Nonmetropolitan Areas: 1980-1984

State	Population 1980	Population 1984	Percent of: Population 1980	Percent of: Population 1984	Change 1980-84 Percent	Change 1980-84 Number
ALASKA						
Metropolitan	174,431	227,000	43.4	45.4	30.1	52,569
Nonmetropolitan	227,420	273,000	56.6	54.6	20.0	45,580
ARIZONA						
Metropolitan	2,040,705	2,310,000	75.1	75.7	13.2	269,295
Nonmetropolitan	677,720	743,000	24.9	24.3	9.6	65,280
CALIFORNIA						
Metropolitan	22,554,563	24,371,000	95.3	95.1	8.0	1,816,437
Nonmetropolitan	1,113,384	1,251,000	4.7	4.9	12.4	137,616
COLORADO						
Metropolitan	2,326,479	2,563,000	80.5	80.6	10.2	236,521
Nonmetropolitan	563,256	615,000	19.5	19.4	9.2	51,744
HAWAII						
Metropolitan	762,565	805,000	79.0	77.5	5.6	42,435
Nonmetropolitan	202,126	233,000	21.0	22.4	15.2	30,874
IDAHO						
Metropolitan	173,125	189,000	18.3	18.9	9.2	15,875
Nonmetropolitan	771,002	811,000	81.7	81.0	5.2	39,998
MONTANA						
Metropolitan	188,731	201,000	24.0	24.4	6.5	12,269
Nonmetropolitan	597,959	624,000	76.0	75.7	4.4	26,041
NEVADA						
Metropolitan	656,710	748,000	82.0	82.1	13.9	91,290
Nonmetropolitan	143,798	163,000	18.0	17.9	13.3	19,202
NEW MEXICO						
Metropolitan	609,720	662,000	46.8	46.5	8.6	52,280
Nonmetropolitan	693,583	762,000	53.2	53.5	9.9	68,417
OREGON						
Metropolitan	1,763,327	1,794,000	67.0	67.1	1.7	30,673
Nonmetropolitan	869,829	880,000	33.0	32.9	1.2	10,171
UTAH						
Metropolitan	1,112,328	1,266,000	77.2	76.6	12.2	137,672
Nonmetropolitan	332,709	386,000	22.8	23.4	16.0	53,291
WASHINGTON						
Metropolitan	3,322,441	3,509,000	80.0	80.7	5.6	186,559
Nonmetropolitan	809,912	840,000	19.6	19.3	3.7	30,088
WYOMING						
Metropolitan	71,856	75,000	15.3	14.7	4.4	3,144
Nonmetropolitan	397,701	436,000	84.5	85.3	10.0	38,299

Source: U.S. Bureau of the Census, 1985a.

Living Arrangements

The long-term increase in the prevalence of divorce in the United States, and the more recent phenomenon of an increasing number of never-married mothers, have altered living arrangements for children. Table 5 demonstrates that in all western states, children were more likely to live in single-parent families in 1980 than in 1970.

The greatest increases in the percent of children in single-parent families between 1970 and 1980, and the highest percentages in 1980, occurred in California and Nevada, where more than one-quarter of the children lived with one parent. But more than one-fifth of the children in Alaska, Arizona, Colorado, Hawaii, New Mexico, Oregon, and Washington lived in single-parent families in 1980. This trend was so strong that in seven of the western states (California, Colorado, Hawaii, Montana, New Mexico, Oregon, and Washington) the number of children in two-parent families actually declined in spite of substantial population growth.

These figures understate the actual number of children who have experience with separation, divorce, and life in single-parent families. These data represent snapshots at two points in time, and do not take into account what has happened in the decade in between. Children in two-parent families may be living with a step-parent. A study done by the Census Bureau estimates that 59 percent of the children born in 1983 will live with a single parent at some time before they reach 18 (American Demographics, 1983: page 14).

Life in a single-parent family may well be temporary, since many parents eventually remarry. However the normal family experience for children born today will no longer be that of life with the same two parents throughout childhood. Instead, the majority of the new generation will have some experience with divorce and life with just one parent.

. . . the normal family experience for children born today will include divorce and life with just one parent. . .

Once the adjustment to a new living arrangement has been made, children may be happier living with one parent than with both if there has been a great deal of tension and conflict between the parents. However, single-parent families have fewer resources to draw upon. The most pressing problem for these families, if they are headed by a woman, is financial. In 1978, only 48 percent of divorced or separated women with children had agreements to receive child support. While 75 percent of those women received some or all of the agreed upon support, the amount averaged only $1,800 a year.

Because of these financial problems, single-parent families headed by women have been identified as an emerging poverty class. Thirty-five percent of

Table 5. Changing Living Arrangements for Children Under 18 in Western States: 1970 and 1980

State	Single Parent[1]				Two-Parent			
	Percent		Number		Percent		Number	
	1970	1980	1970	1980	1970	1980	1970	1980
Alaska	14.7	20.1	17,610	26,291	85.3	79.9	102,160	104,509
Arizona	17.2	22.4	111,383	177,298	82.8	77.6	536,049	614,212
California	19.2	26.1	1,278,209	1,666,114	80.8	73.9	5,380,913	4,717,466
Colorado	15.2	20.2	118,258	163,621	84.8	79.8	659,441	646,385
Hawaii	16.2	21.9	44,643	60,258	83.8	78.1	231,030	214,893
Idaho	12.8	16.0	33,889	49,132	87.2	84.0	230,820	257,945
Montana	13.7	17.0	34,774	39,407	86.3	17.0	218,956	192,396
Nevada	18.1	26.0	30,876	56,051	81.9	74.0	139,666	159,530
New Mexico	18.9	23.0	77,192	96,079	81.1	77.0	331,411	321,658
Oregon	14.7	21.6	102,890	156,342	85.3	78.4	597,075	567,466
Utah	11.7	13.3	49,877	71,754	88.3	86.7	376,474	467,750
Washington	15.0	20.7	174,634	235,896	85.0	79.3	990,164	903,697
Wyoming	13.3	15.6	15,984	22,773	86.7	84.4	104,188	123,208

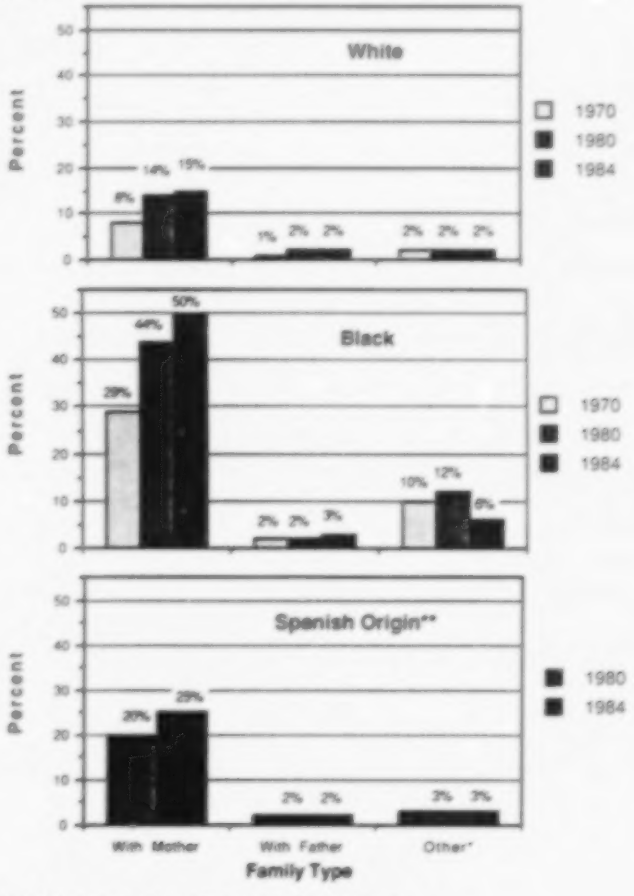
Source: U.S. Bureau of the Census 1973: Table 159, and 1983c: Table 237.
[1] Includes a small number of children who are living with neither parent.

the families headed by a single woman with children under 18 were below the poverty level in 1984, compared to only 7 percent of all other families. Looking at the situation in terms of the number of children, instead of the number of families, makes the comparison even bleaker. Fifty-four percent of the children under 18 in single-parent families headed by women lived below the poverty level in 1984, compared to 12 percent of the children living in all other types of families (U.S. Bureau of the Census, 1986a: pages 6, 7, and 20).

In the U.S., the likelihood of living in a single-parent family varies greatly by racial background, as Figure 3 illustrates. In 1984, 15 percent of the White children in the U.S. lived with just their mother, compared to 25 percent of Spanish origin children, and 50 percent of the Black children. Although state-level data are not available since 1980, this figure shows that increases in the percentage of children living in single-parent families have continued into the 1980s.

In spite of news stories and movies about single-parent fathers, only two to three percent of children in any racial group lived with their fathers in 1984, and there has been little change since 1970. Instead, White and Spanish origin children are as likely to have an arrangement classified as "other" (i.e., living with other relatives, in foster homes, or in an institution), and Black children are substantially *more*

Figure 3. Percent of children under 18 in the U.S. living in single-parent and other families by race/ethnicity: 1970, 1980, and 1984



* Other includes living with other relative or in foster homes.
** Data were not available for the Spanish Origin population in 1970.
(Source: U.S. Bureau of the Census, 1979: Table 70; 1985b: Table 66.)

likely to be in an arrangement classified as "other" than they are to live with just their father.

Recently, the number of divorces has dipped below the highest point achieved in 1981. The number of children involved in divorce has also declined, because family sizes are small and couples tend to postpone childbearing. But a substantial decline in either the number of divorces, or the number of children involved in divorce, is not expected.

Divorce, however, is only one factor leading to single-parent families. An increasing percent of children live with a mother who has never been married. In 1970, only seven percent of the children in the U.S. lived with a never-married mother. This increased

. . . fifty-four percent of the children under 18 in single-parent families headed by women lived below the poverty level in 1984. . .

to 15 percent in 1980 and to 25 percent by 1985. Although this trend is most prevalent among Blacks, White and Hispanic children are also increasingly likely to live with a never-married mother (U.S. Bureau of the Census, 1986b: page 11).

Youth programs should be responsive to children in families with marital difficulties. Children drop out of a program during times of family stress because of the emotional and financial problems involved. Some schools have established support groups so that children can help one another with the emotional problems that may accompany separation and divorce.

Many of the never-married mothers are teenagers. Programs that help young women learn basic housekeeping and child-care skills, as well as other programs that help them remain in and complete school, will be immensely valuable to the mothers and to their children, as well as to the community.

Table 6. Number and Percent of women in the Labor Force in Western States With Children 6 to 17: 1970 and 1980

State	1970		1980	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Alaska	9,973	51.1	19,010	65.3
Arizona	61,355	48.7	116,676	61.4
California	726,332	49.9	1,084,702	65.2
Colorado	85,719	51.4	143,495	66.1
Hawaii	32,731	59.7	45,523	70.0
Idaho	27,100	51.0	42,557	64.5
Montana	24,635	48.2	36,461	63.3
Nevada	18,802	53.9	41,651	71.1
New Mexico	33,594	44.3	55,396	57.2
Oregon	78,882	50.0	123,183	64.5
Utah	38,625	53.3	55,339	64.5
Washington	125,891	49.7	193,407	63.7
Wyoming	12,680	50.7	21,415	66.6

Source: U.S. Bureau of the Census 1973: Table 162, and 1983c: Table 240.

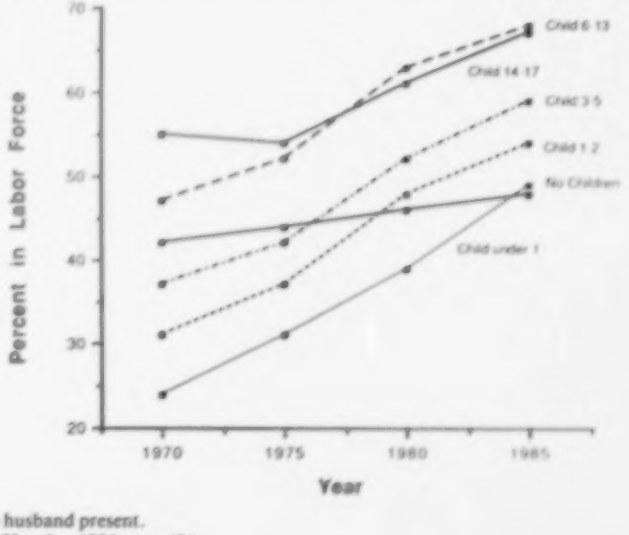
Working Mothers

One of the most pervasive, yet unexpected, trends in recent years has been the entry of large numbers of women into the labor force. In 1973, based on extrapolations from past trends, the Bureau of Labor Statistics predicted that 39.2 million women would be in the labor force by 1980, and 43.7 million by 1990 (Johnston, 1973:4). In fact, the 1990 estimate was exceeded by 1980, when there were 44.7 million women in the labor force.

For the western states between 1970 and 1980, Table 6 tracks change in the number and percentage of women in the labor force who have children ages 6 to 17. Hawaii and Nevada had by far the highest percentages in 1980, with 70 and 71 percent respectively in the labor force. Nevada had the largest percentage increase, going from 54 to 71 percent in the decade, an increase of 17 percent. Several other states had increases between 14 and 16 percent including Alaska, California, Colorado, Idaho, Montana, Washington, and Wyoming.

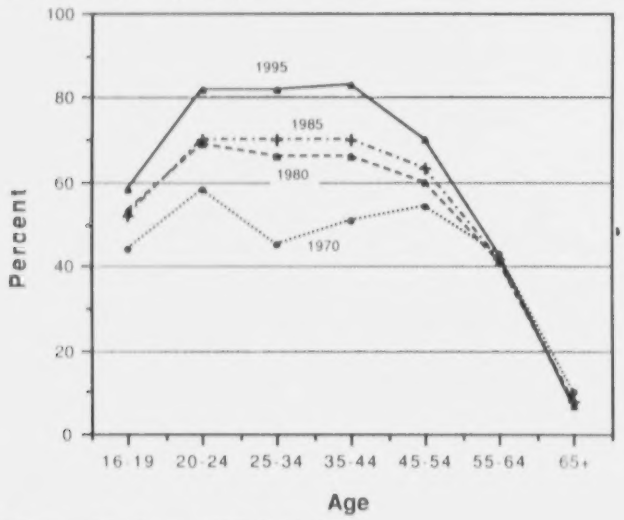
Although state-level data are not available since 1980, Figure 4 depicts trends at the national level for wives

Figure 4. Percent of married women* in labor force by age of youngest child: 1970-1985



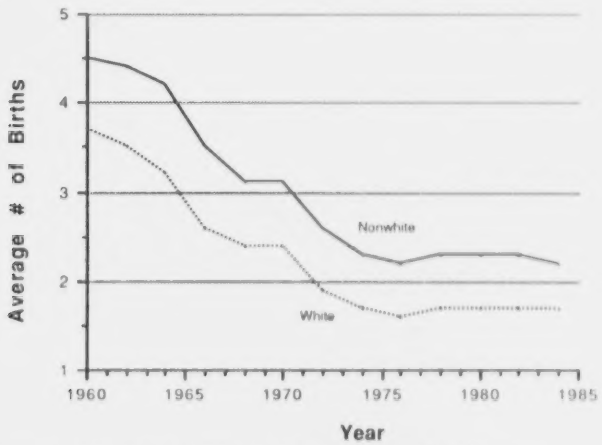
* With a husband present.
(Source: Hayghe, 1986:page 45.)

Figure 5. U.S. labor force participation rates for women: 1970 to 1995



(Source: U.S. Bureau of the Census, 1985b: Table 660)

Figure 6. Average number of births per woman for Whites and Non whites: U.S., 1960-1984



(Source: U.S. Bureau of the Census, 1986c: Table b11-19, and 1986c: Table 81.)

with a husband present in the home from 1970 to 1985. Focusing on recent changes, the percent of mothers in the labor force with children 14 to 17 increased from 60 percent in 1980 to 67 percent in 1985. Those with children 6 to 13 increased from 63 to 68 percent and are now more likely to be in the labor force than women in any other category.

There are a variety of reasons for these changes. The more education a woman receives the more likely she is to work, and educational levels for women have increased steadily. Women now have fewer children and it is easier to return to work, or to remain in the labor force. Divorce is also likely to put women in the labor force, and until the early 1980s there was a steady increase in divorce in the U.S.

After a divorce the household income for a woman generally drops dramatically because she almost always keeps the children, yet the family is deprived of her husband's earnings. Child support and alimony payments rarely make up the difference. So divorced women either return to work or increase the amount of time they work. However, since women generally earn less than men, even this usually does not bring their household earnings back to pre-divorce levels. On the other hand, men are generally better off after a divorce (Duncan and Hoffman, 1985).

Another important factor is the restructuring of the U.S. economy. Jobs in the service sector, generally held by women, grew by 33 percent during the 70s, while manufacturing and other industrial jobs, typically held by men, grew by only 11 percent during the same period. More recently, between 1980 and 1984, jobs typically held by women increased by 13 percent while those held by men decreased by -3 percent (U.S. Bureau of the Census, 1986c: page 389).[1] During the last recession, unemployment rates for women fell below those for men for the first time since World War II. Consequently even married women with working husbands have increased their labor-force participation.

Given these factors, women are likely to continue to enter the labor force for some time to come. Figure 5 shows projected labor force participation rates, by age, to 1995. The pattern of participation for 1970 shows that women tended to drop out of the labor force once they married and/or had children and to return after several years. This pattern had characterized women's participation from WWII to

it is essential that programs recruit both employed women and men for volunteer work. . .

[1] Employment in service and finance, insurance and real estate, where women comprise 61 and 59 percent of the employment respectively, were categorized as primarily female. Jobs in mining, construction, manufacturing and transportation, communications and utilities, where women comprise 15, 9, 32 and 27 percent of the employment respectively, were classified as primarily male.

1970, while the percent of women in the labor force continued to grow over time. Projections made in the early part of the decade were far off the mark because that pattern disappeared during the 1970's. Now and in the future, once a woman enters the labor force she is likely to remain there, and women are increasingly likely to choose to enter the labor force.

These trends highlight the need for adequate and affordable pre- and after-school programs. Programs which not only provide supervision, but which also help both boys and girls learn household skills such as cooking, cleaning, proper nutrition, and wise food buying will be especially beneficial to both children and their families.

Successful youth programs usually rely on volunteer leaders, and with more mothers and other women holding full-time jobs, it may become increasingly difficult to recruit volunteers. However, some factors mitigate this trend. Research indicates that people with more education are more likely to participate in volunteer organizations, and educational levels for women have risen continually. In 1970, 18 percent of the women 25 and over had at least some college education. By 1980 this had risen to 27 percent, and to 32 percent by 1985 (U.S. Bureau of the Census, 1985: page 133).

Women also have fewer children than in the past (see Figure 6). The average number of children a woman is likely to have during her lifetime has declined from 3.7 for White and 4.5 for nonwhite women in 1960, to 1.7 for White and 2.2 for nonwhite women. Participation in youth activities can therefore be concentrated on one or two children.

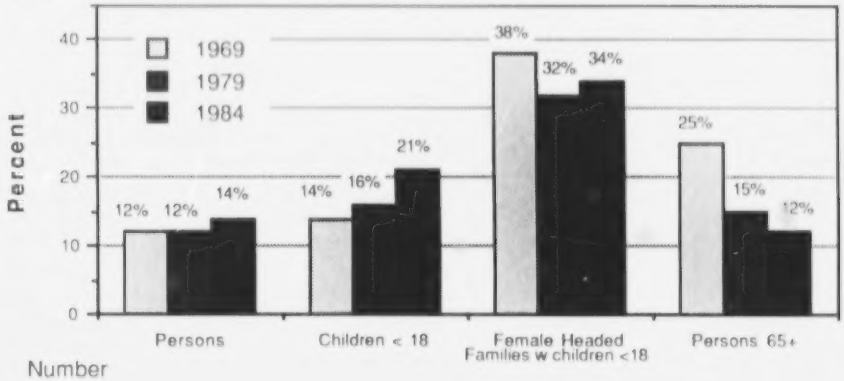
It is essential that youth-oriented programs take the increase in working women into account and recruit both employed women and men for volunteer work with children and young people. Shared leadership, short-term programs, and flexible time frames are techniques that may be helpful, but whatever incentives are necessary, it is crucial to recruit more adults in leadership roles with youth programs.

Table 7. Number and Percent of Children Under 18 Below the Poverty Level in Western States: 1970 and 1980

State	1970		1980	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Alaska	17,055	14.2	15,444	12.1
Arizona	113,455	17.6	127,889	16.5
California	826,538	12.5	946,576	15.2
Colorado	96,602	12.4	62,341	7.9
Hawaii	27,834	10.1	35,103	13.0
Idaho	33,044	12.6	27,951	9.3
Montana	33,172	13.1	20,906	9.1
Nevada	15,160	8.9	20,752	10.0
New Mexico	106,809	26.3	90,765	22.1
Oregon	74,022	10.6	84,626	12.0
Utah	44,541	10.5	56,986	10.7
Washington	112,369	9.6	127,746	11.2
Wyoming	13,978	11.6	7,428	5.4

Source: U.S. Bureau of the Census 1973: Table 182, and 1983c: Table 245.

Figure 7. Persons below the poverty level: 1969-1984



Number (in millions)				
1969	24.1	9.5	10.4	4.8
1979	26.1	10.0	13.5	3.7
1984	33.7	12.9	16.4	3.3

(Source: U.S. Bureau of the Census, 1985b: Tables 767 and 769)

Children Living in Poverty

The increasing prevalence of female-headed, single-parent families is linked to increased numbers of children below the poverty line. Table 7 shows changes in the number and percent of children below the poverty level for states in the west in 1970 and 1980. Once again this area exhibits a pattern of diversity. By far the highest percentage of children under 18 living below the poverty level are in New Mexico, and although the number and percentage have declined from 1970, the percentage is still exceedingly high compared to other states, probably because of the large percentage of Hispanics in the state. Five other states, Alaska, Colorado, Idaho, Montana, and Wyoming, had declines in both the percentage and number of children living below the poverty level between 1970 and 1980. However, six states—California, Hawaii, Nevada, Oregon, Utah, and Washington—exhibited the opposite pattern and had increasing numbers and percentages of children below the poverty level.

State-level data are not available since 1980. However, at the national level there has been a dramatic increase in both the number and percentage of children below the poverty level since 1979 (see Figure 7). In 1979, 16 percent

. . . by 1984, 21 percent of the nation's children lived below the poverty level . . .

or 10 million of the nation's children lived below the poverty level. By 1984, 21 percent, or 12.9 million, lived below the poverty level. The percent of female-headed families with children under 18 below the poverty level, which had decreased between 1969 and 1979, increased from 32 to 34 percent in the same time period.

In addition to changes in family living patterns, another major factor that influences the likelihood of living below the poverty level is the increase in unemployment. Consequently, although data are not available at the state level, states and areas within states with substantial increases in unemployment since 1980 probably also have increases in the number and percent of children living in poverty. With the improving economy at the national level, both the number and percent of children, and the number and percent of female-headed families with children below the poverty level, declined slightly from their highest points in 1983. It remains to be seen if these improvements will be broad enough, or last long enough, to bring poverty rates for these groups back down to earlier, somewhat lower levels.

An obvious need exists for youth programs to make a substantial effort to reach children who live in poverty. Many are minorities and/or live in inner city areas, and/or have a single mother who works. These children represent a crucial challenge to all organizations that work with youth. Reaching them with meaningful programs is vitally important to the entire community and to future society as a whole.

Conclusion

Youth in the west are increasing in number, but increased numbers will not necessarily translate into increased expenditures for appropriate programs. In the future, children in the west are more likely to have a nonwhite racial background—especially Hispanic or Asian— and they may be first generation Americans whose parents' native language is not English. Political and financial support is likely to erode for organizations that do not structure youth programs to meet the unique needs of these children.

Young people are more likely to live in urban/suburban areas, or to move there for work and/or a higher education once they graduate from high school. Consequently it is essential that programs be attractive to youth based in metropolitan areas. Over half of the young people will spend some time in a single-parent family, usually headed by the mother, and often under serious financial strain. Programs must be devised to provide the unmet emotional and physical needs of these children, many of whom will be alone a great deal of the time, since the majority of mothers will be in the labor force.

the increasing prevalence of female-headed, single-parent families is linked to increased numbers of children below the poverty line.

Changing characteristics of youth reflect the changes in our society and in turn require equal changes from our institutions in response to new and different social needs. The changes described here all point to a heightened need for youth-oriented programs. To provide for our children's future it is essential that we find the resources and personnel for such programs.

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